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however, by a more systematic arrangement of topics, by condensation in place^s and by occasional comparisons with other rubber plants and conditions in other countries.

The rubber species *Funtumia elastica* is confined to central and western Equatorial Africa, between 10° N. and 10° S., that is to say, to the Southern Sudan, the Belgian Congo and French Equatorial Africa, Guinea, the northern part of Angola and the western portion of Uganda. This is the tropical forest region of heavy rainfall, exceeding 50 inches a year.

Christy spent five years in East Africa and Uganda, traveled also in most of the West African Colonies and gained his knowledge of the rubber industry from personal experience and from his intercourse with those who are practically interested in the plant. He also utilized scientific literature dealing with the chemistry of rubber, and the climate and soils adapted to its cultivation.

HENRYK ARCTOWSKI.

ASIA

The Duab of Turkestan. A Physiographic Sketch and Account of Some Travels. By W. Rickmer Rickmers. xv and 564 pp. Maps, ill., index. University Press, Cambridge. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill., 1913. \$9.44, postpaid. 10½ x 8.

The "Duab," or "Two Rivers," is a name applied by Mr. Rickmers to the part of Russian Turkestan between the Amur and Syr Rivers, the ancient Oxus and Jaxartes. This includes the khanates of Bokhara and Khiva. The portion dealt with most thoroughly is the Zarafshan valley and the mountains at its head. The purpose is to give a complete treatment of the geographical features of a single definite region possessing considerable unity. Topography, climate, flora, fauna and human population are all discussed and are frequently compared with those of other regions. A fair number of statistics are given and in addition there are many descriptions of scenery, of the habits of the people, and of ordinary incidents of travel. Taken as a whole the book gives a clear picture of the Duab as it exists to-day under Russian rule.

The volume is an interesting example of the present stage of geographical development. The author is not a geographer by profession; he is an excellent traveler with a keen interest in the things which he sees and with a strong desire to explain them. Having become especially interested in the region of the Duab, which he has visited many times, he has read widely to train himself in geographical principles. The result is a book which stands midway between the mere accounts of travel which were called geography in the past, and the thorough treatment of geographical regions by specialists which will form the geography of the future. Feeling that geography is a new science and being conscious of the large number of problems which his reading has opened to him, the author devotes a large portion of his space to what may be called geographical and especially physiographic philosophizing. In other words, he attempts to explain and elucidate a large number of matters which are familiar to the trained geographer but not to the average reader. In all doubtful questions he is extremely careful to introduce as many modifying considerations as possible and goes so far in this that in some cases one cannot form one's own opinion and is in doubt as to what may be that of the author. He succeeds admirably, however, in impressing upon the reader the fact that in spite of recent advances in the physiographic side of geography only a beginning has been made and there is still an enormous field for research.

The chief problems discussed by Mr. Rickmers are all more or less directly climatic. They are touched upon somewhat in the main body of the work, but their chief treatment is in an appendix of fifty pages or more, where conclusions are summed up. The most important subjects are present climate, the relation of forests to climate, the snow line, glaciation, desiccation, sand and loess. In the body of the volume the author emphasizes the rapidity and wholesale character of erosion among dry mountains where sudden floods, avalanches, and the like cause detritus to come down from the mountains in large quantities during short periods. He dwells especially on mud avalanches or "mud spates," a term which he advocates for general use.

The most important portion of the book is the discussion of the connected

problems of glaciation and desiccation. The author believes that glaciation in a country so dry as Central Asia must be due rather to increased humidity than to lowered temperature. He holds that deglaciation and desiccation must be carefully distinguished and that they are not necessarily parts of the same process. He suggests that the decrease of glaciers may cause an increase in the size of rivers and thereby may produce a result apparently the reverse of desiccation. This springs from his idea that the basins of Central Asia are practically self-contained so far as their supply of water is concerned; that is, that they receive almost no water from the surrounding oceans and give up almost none. The process of desiccation according to him is largely due to a gradual diminution of the available water in the central basins of Central Asia. Long ago an encroachment of the sea filled the basins and supplied a large amount of water whose gradual escape beyond the limits of the basins has brought on desiccation.

In regard to changes of climate during historic times Mr. Rickmers is decided in his opinions. In the first place, as he says on page 510, "Happenings of the present time and even of the last century are quite immaterial in this problem. . . . Five hundred or 1000 years form about the smallest unit of sub-division. The abandonment of the dead cities of the Lop basin (Tarim) is only just admissible as evidence. . . . Anything observed during the past century, or covered by the latest exact scientific records, such as the meteorological observations or the rise of Lake Aral during the last thirty years, does not count at all." Again, on page 519, speaking of Lake Aral, he says: "Berg has shown a rise of the lake from 1880 to 1901 amounting to an average of 90 mm. per year. He uses this undeniable fact as an argument against progressive desiccation with which, of course, it need not have anything to do." This point is well emphasized because many writers have fallen exactly into Berg's error. Rickmers' studies leave him convinced that there is a "stubborn tendency" toward desiccation which may, however, be slightly interrupted by periodic fluctuations. "Looking backward," he says (p. 523), "a progressive desiccation attacking the irrigation fringe seems fairly certain and need not have been very great in order to affect many thousands of people. It was more extreme and rapid in the Lop basin than in the Duab." As to the future he contents himself with saying that the chances are in favor of a continuation of present conditions.

ELLSWORTH HUNTINGTON.

Anson Burlingame and the First Chinese Mission to Foreign Powers. By Frederick Wells Williams. x and 370 pp. Ill., index. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1912. \$2. 8½ x 6.

If the story of Burlingame were to be written at all it is well that it has fallen into such sympathetic hands, for Prof. Williams was so situated at his most impressionable period that the men and principles who and which were developing at the gates of China were household words.

The career of Anson Burlingame follows a sharp line of cleavage. On one side he is to be studied as a representative of American polity not only in the Far East but at home as well, a polity based on utter ignorance and developed by timorous and vote-saving submission to the violence of Sand Lot oratory upon our Pacific shore line. On the other side he demands attention as the forerunner, indeed the discoverer, of an external polity for China, an empire which had endured throughout the other history of the world, content in its own self-satisfied seclusion and as ignorant as incurious of the exact position of the barbarian nations. In this latter and less comprehensible division of the work Prof. Williams has pursued a very direct and cautious method. It is in the very essence of conditions at the Chinese court and in the dominant circle of the literati that he has by no means been able to make it clear that Burlingame was sent abroad as the representative of the Dragon Throne in a whole-hearted desire that China should take a place among the nations of the world. It must probably remain impossible of determination whether the Chinese court really intended to learn the true position of its oldest civilization in relation to the newer civilizations which it probably scarcely comprehended to be civilizations in any sort, or whether the Burlingame mission was devised as a convenient sop to the varied demands of the foreign powers. Was Burlingame the directing mind or was he but a convenient pawn in the game? Prof. Williams regards him as the former. The verdict of history is valuable only in proportion as it has data